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FBI Reports No Hint of Olympic Terrorist Activity

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WASHINGTON—FBI Director William H. Webster, expressing "cautious optimism," said Tuesday that U.S. intelligence has turned up no "specific thoughts, plans or activities" indicating that there will be terrorism at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

"That doesn't mean there aren't any," Webster said at a breakfast meeting with reporters. "We haven't identified any."

Webster said experience has shown that "you don't pick up very much until you get close to the time" of the event. "But we're in that zone right now, and so I have a certain cautious optimism," he added.

Reason for Caution

Withdrawal of the Soviet Union from the Games has not affected the FBI's plans for dealing with security threats, Webster said.

"There are those who argue that (the Soviets') reasons for leaving, which were the inadequacy of security, might also be a reason for proving they were right," he added. "So we have just as much a reason to be cautious at the present time as there was before they left."

Webster described relationships between federal, state and local law enforcement officials assigned to the Games as "complicated," but said things "are going very smoothly. We've been cross-training with each other, running exercises, and we feel pretty good about that."

Guarded Optimism

He related his guarded optimism about the Games to the overall experience with terrorism in the United States, noting that there have been only five terrorist incidents in the first 5½ months of this year. This level is "way below" last year's, he said.

The political climate also is "reasonably healthy," Webster said, noting that "the situation in the Middle East is a good deal more quiet than it was six months ago."

"Anything that happens in the world could cause a reaction of some kind or a terrorist event in the United States," he said. "Once the television and press start to focus on the Olympics, it becomes a logical place for something to happen if it were going to happen."

He continued: "We can't guarantee to keep things from happening, but we try very hard to identify them before they happen. And we're fully prepared to deal with events should they occur there."

On another topic, Webster said 1,448 local, state and federal officials are under investigation in cases involving suspected corruption of public officials. State and local law enforcement officials alone account for a third of that total, he said, expressing concern over the number of lawmen under scrutiny. Webster attributed those figures to the "tremendous bribes" that he said were being offered by drug traffickers.